

REMARKS

This responds to the Office Action mailed on March 23, 2004 and the Advisory Action mailed July 12, 2004. Claims 16 and 17 are amended herein; no claims have been added; and claims 1-7, 19, 26, 29-37, 39 and 40 are canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 8, 18, 27 and 28 were canceled previously. As a result, claims 9-17, 20-25 and 38 are pending.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 9-15 and 38 have been allowed.

Claims 19 and 25 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 16 has been amended to include language recited in allowable claim 19, and thus claim 19 is canceled in view thereof. Claim 17 has been amended for further clarity to include language corresponding with the language associated with now-amended claim 16. Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 25 further limits and thus properly depends on amended claim 16, and thus is in condition for allowance. Thus, Applicant asserts that claims 16-17 and 20-25 are in condition for allowance.

Applicant respectfully requests consideration and allowance of these pending claims.

§103 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1-7, 16-17, 20-24, 26, 29-30, 34-35 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokoyama et al. (US 5,452,212) in view of O’Shea (US 6,199,013); and claims 31-33, 36-37, 39-40 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokoyama et al. (US 5,452,212) in view of O’Shea (US 6,199,013) and further in view of Hasegawa et al. (US 6,510,379). Applicant respectfully traverses.

Claims 1-7, 26, 29-37, 39 and 40 are canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant expressly reserves the right to prosecute these claims in a continuation application.

Claims 16-17 and 20-25 are believed to be in condition for allowance at least for the reasons provided above.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney (612) 373-6960 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

All correspondence should continue to be sent to:

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Respectfully submitted,

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By their Representatives,

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Date 8-10-04

By Marvin L. Beekman
Marvin L. Beekman
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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop AF, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 10 day of August, 2004.

CANDIS BUENDING

Name

Signature

Candis Buending)